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THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

The question of Immortality involves the question of Substance. What is Substantial? If a being can be proved to be substance, it is of course permanent, and cannot be destroyed. Is the soul substance?

I. The substance of that which can be destroyed must necessarily possess other potentialities than the one realized. The destructible thing is not substance, but a mere phase of it. Substance contains in itself the entire round of possibilities or potentialities; its actuality and potentiality are one.

Illustrations.—An individual thing—a stone—may be crumbled to dust; the dust may be pulverized in water, or chemically changed, and its being mingled with a score of substances, in which all of its original identity is lost.

A plant grows and possesses individuality; it may be cut down and rot, and mingle with the atmosphere and soil, or be burnt up and its elements unite with others.

A chemical element even, (e. g. a quantity of oxygen,) will, if set free, seek some other elements, with which it soon combines and loses all its former shape and properties.

A piece of iron rusts or oxydizes until it is a piece of iron no longer. Water is potentially ice or vapor when it is liquid, or when it is ice it is potentially vapor or liquid. Any individual form of water may be destroyed at once by realizing either of its potentialities.

II. Thus so long as a being has potentialities which depend upon beings other than itself, it is destructible. Allow a change

in the totality of conditions which surround it and you change it.

III. A destructible being, therefore, is limited from without and finds itself conditioned by others. If there is an indestructible being or a true Substance, it must be such a being as has its limits or determinations within and through its own act.

IV. A self-determined being is therefore the only immortal being. It alone possesses individuality independent of other beings. Alteration is a process of "othering." If a self-determined being alters, it must be through its own act. It is its own other, its own limit, its own means, and its own end. All its activity moves in a circle, and has itself for a result. It is, therefore, a unity and a duality.

V. It is therefore true that no substance can exist except a self-determined one.

To define more clearly what a self-determined substance is, we must consider it in each of its functions:—(a) It is that which determines, and (b) that which is determined.

(a) As the determiner, the pure active, it is not in anywise limited, and has no constitution or nature which characterizes it. It is pure potentiality. (b) But as determined it is the pure passive, the constituted, the nature, and is that which characterizes.

The determiner is not a being in time and space, but is the Ego of a conscious being. The act of this Ego results as "the determined" in a "character."

VI. The self-determined being is, as such, only in the form of Consciousness.

Thus we have found the substantial, and can say that it is conscious being.

VII. Conscious Being, which is determiner and determined, active and passive, subject and object, is in the form of a process of self-identification; this is an eternal process for the reason that this activity creates its own object, a circle whose end is its beginning.

It developes through the continual approximation of its passivity to its activity, through its dissolving of its objectivity into subjectivity. This development therefore, instead of destroying individuality as change does, is a process of self-

identification, the very essence of consciousness itself. IT IS
WORLD HISTORY.

HISTORICAL.

(A Fantasia on Hegel's Philosophy of History.)

Human history divides into three great epochs, when considered according to its theory of the nature of the soul. In the earliest stage—what may be called the foetal life and infancy thereof—we find no developed conceptions on this subject. In the second epoch the soul is regarded as a product of nature and subordinate thereto. In the third epoch man comes to assign to his soul the rank of self-existence, and accordingly he subordinates all else to himself.

These three epochs may be again classified, as the periods of dominion (a) of the senses—with fancy and imagination; (b) of the Understanding—with reflection and abstraction; (c) of the Reason—with insight and concreteness of comprehension.

I. The simple sensuous knowing does not make distinction among the objects of time and space, separating the dependent from the independent. Everything to it is an immediate existence; and since immediate existence must be *causa sui* or self-determined, the infant is prone to regard all immediate things as possessed of intelligence and will, so far as these attributes are implied in *arbitrariness*. The South Sea savages thought that fire (when Captain Cook first kindled it on their island) was a malignant demon that fed on dry wood, and bit any one that touched it. Like the South Sea Islanders, almost the whole of Africa south of the Great Desert is peopled with human infants. The light of the sun of the physical world glares upon them with unparalleled splendor; but the light of inner consciousness shines as yet only with feeble rays. They do not possess any knowledge of themselves as universal beings. The soul is to them, hence, a mere embodiment of caprice and arbitrariness.

What we find existing in Africa at the present day, we find to have been the primeval condition of mankind in general if we correctly infer from such data as are given us.

All historic certainty ceases when we trace back the annals of any nation for a comparatively short period. Beyond this

lies the realm of tradition and mythology, in which the typical and historical are confounded. Back of this we are able to trace still a few steps further by means of the data derived from natural science. We can, for instance, in the Swiss lakes—in the cypress forests sunk below New Orleans—in the deep mud along the Nile—in the remains of human art there found—we can trace an approximate chronology that extends some thousands of years beyond the written records. The geologist—considering the rates of deposit of deltas and of the growth and decay of forests—affirms the existence of the human race in the Mississippi valley nearly 50,000 years before our time. Baron Bunsen finds the Egyptians advanced in civilization far enough to manufacture pottery, from seven to nine thousand years before our era. How ancient were the dwellers on the Swiss lakes, we shall not inquire. The pre-historic human being seems to have been substantially the same as the unhistoric human being of the present. Absorbed in the dreamy life of the senses, he lived, and died, and made no sign. The absence of objects upon which he has impressed his rational will is proof conclusive that he had not attained to that degree of self-knowledge which characterizes humanity when advanced beyond sensuousness.

Man as an individual, immediate existence—as a sensuous object—stands over against all that is in time and space as a pure other or opposite. The Reason within him which is as yet potential (undeveloped) can transcend all bounds in space. It can invent Mathematics, and thereby pronounce the necessary conditions of all immediate being in the universe and throughout all time. But when man is in the savage state, he has not yet gained possession of this universal attribute of his, and therefore is no master over nature. Nature is to him an overpowering necessity and he yields to external circumstances. Of course, his idea of immortality is very vague. He believes in spectres and ghosts, and tries by spells to raise or allay the demonic power of departed spirits. He is as yet unborn from the dominion of nature into self-determination (the realm of Spirit), and may therefore be said to be *en rapport* with nature. Somnambulists feel their separation as *individuals* from their bodies, and that class of phenomena (i. e. animal magnetism, &c.) is most frequent among the lowest ranks

of humanity. Hence, although they hold to the separate existence of the soul after death, yet as they merely exist under the control of natural powers in life; so in death the soul is not conceived as anything more than a natural existence—a ghost—a body which has lost some very important attributes and gained nothing of advantage thereby. Life's functions all gone, it can eat no more and drink no more—no more enjoy the delights of the body.

II. In the second epoch of History man ascends into a conscious separation of the individual from the generic entity. Man as universal is contrasted with man as individual. This epoch is transitional. Here belong China, India and the Buddhist civilizations, with the Persian, Phœnician, and Egyptian, in which the principle is modified. In one simple word, we name this phase the Oriental. The Universal is distinguished from the Particular; but the Universal is identified as the negative might of nature, and man is the Particular which is ever annulled by it. The Brahmin can only save himself from external annihilation and absorption into Brahm by performing the act of absorption himself, through abstraction; when he becomes giddy with self-contemplation, and loses all special consciousness like the dreamer and the mesmeric subject, then he is Brahm and superlatively blest. Holding as he does this absolute abstraction to be the Highest Truth, it is consistent that he should despise all that is distinctively human. He builds asylums for old cows and monkeys, but leaves sick humanity miserably to perish. The animal in general is the appearance of Brahm even more than the man, for the latter has consciousness, which diffracts prismatically into multiplicity of individuals, while the brute instinct remains still in implicit unity.

This stage is properly to be called the Pantheistic stage. All is God and God is one. All multiplicity, therefore, is only *Maya* or delusion. There is and can be only One, the negative unity that absorbs all into it, the Saturn that devours all children of Time. The varieties of this fundamental doctrine of the Orient may be briefly characterized as follows: they are stages of ascent towards a recognition of the soul as independent of Nature.

(a) First, there is China with its one substance upon which all depends. The emperor is the visible embodiment of it—the patriarchal principle, in which the individual is the merest organ of the unity that articulates the whole as patriarch and monarch. Note, that in the savage races there was resemblance to the vegetable organism—each part a separate individual, and no real individuality anywhere—all was particularity. In China there is one organism like that of the lowest animal—the polyp, which can feel only. Feeling is the reference of the whole to a central point—the central self, being at home in the members. The plant cannot feel, for each of its members is a separate individual, and thus there is no return into one centre. So in China we have what corresponds to feeling.

(b) India seizes this substantial unity as articulated into members (castes), and we thus attain one degree more of distinctness. These articulations constitute the basis of Castes. The spiritual substance is rigid and allows no transitions: the chandâlas are lowest, and cannot ascend to the next step; they must forever remain distinct, in their marriages and associations, from all others. So, too, the other castes, each exists in isolation from the rest. Thus, in recognizing the Brahmin as descended from the Head of Brahmâ, and as thereby possessing in himself the possibility of realizing Brahm in himself, the East Indian idea at the same time places the Universal as a rigid wall—a law of Nature—around humanity, leaving the individual no freedom at all.

(c) The next higher realization is the Buddhistic. In the Lama worship all are, or may become, priests—no rigid caste system restrains—and in each one of these priests is the possibility of becoming the Grand Lama. But when we come to the Persian and Zend ideas we note the advent of a new element of Consciousness. The extreme East—China, India, and Thibet—have seized true Being as one (as completely abstract) and have regarded this as positive, letting all multiplicity stand as a mere delusion. They do not make any account of the negative by itself. But the Persian seizes the negative, and attributes validity to it as the opposite of the positive. He makes two principles: a positive and negative; and has bro-

ken the abstract unity of the more eastern nations. He has in this seized the nature of spirit more profoundly, for he recognizes in it the importance of the negative, which is the source of all particular existence. Of course, the negative is as substantial as the positive—the particular is as substantial as the universal.

(*d*) The Persian does not seize this thought in all its bearings, but lets it abide in its most obvious realization in nature—that of *light* and *darkness*. The substance of the remoter East is related to the particularity of man, as a negative of it. The realization of the substance destroys man's consciousness, and he perishes as an individual. But Nature has a dualism and the Persian has discovered it.

The light now comes in through openings at the top of this cave, and we are in a fair way to escape into the free air of spirit.

With dualism arises the principle of activity, and the contrast of the negative with the positive leads to a unity quite concrete, as the substance of all.

(*e*) This leads to the Phœnician conception, wherein it is more developed. Pain is the chief element in this mode of worship. Pain is the feeling of subjectivity. The particularity or Finite is itself negative, and in pain feels itself negated. Of course, in pain there is a synthesis of the finite subject with what limits it, and hence where pain is, there is a transcending of mere finitude. To make this an object of consciousness in Religion shows the further elaboration of the new principle which came in with the Persians. The Negative as darkness is at first seized as coördinate with the Positive as light, and in this the Particular is seized as an essential phase. The Phœnicians in their Adonis-worship seize the Negative as related to the Positive in the form of Pain, and thus develope a deeper insight into the nature of spirit. Hercules is the chief deity of the Phœnicians; he ascends from the human by his own deeds and becomes divine, i. e. he negates his negativity, or cancels his finitude; by renouncing his ease and comfort—denying (negating) himself as a natural being—undergoing his "labors" (types of the labors of humanity)—he determines himself.

Of this transitional phase presented in the Western-Oriental History, Egypt is the culmination. Hitherto the Natural has been the Substantial, and spirit, or the soul of Man—his consciousness—merely the product of Nature, a phase merely, and no substantial mode. All the Orient, it is true, believes in the existence of the individual after death—the lowest savages do that. But they believe it in the form of demonology and popular superstition, and all their thought upon the nature of the Substantial, contradicts the popular belief.

(*f*) In Egypt this contradiction culminates, and we have the perpetual recurrence of natural types with a half symbolic meaning peering through. This combination constitutes a riddle: a problem to be solved. Isis is Nature, and the Earth, and the remains of the Oriental unity. Osiris is the Nile, and the Sun, and Life. The Nile had its cycle of rise and fall, and of giving fertility to the land. The sun came and went in closest connection with it. The seed had a period of being buried in the mud and then of growth, and then appeared as seed again. Life seems a circle of birth, growth, decay, and death. All nature is this circle. It arises and departs—the Particular has no abiding, but the process itself seems to be eternal.

This problem fashioned itself in sharpest outlines in the Sphinx: a rude rock beneath, a lion's body, a human head: the whole range of nature from the lowest inorganic to the highest organic. It asked the question: what then? What then? Does the circle close upon itself, or does it develope spirally? How large a cycle does man embrace? If man becomes a fish and rock, in his transmigration he loses consciousness of personal identity, and his immortality does not mean anything. If he is a mere wave of the universal substance, he will undoubtedly be again swallowed up, and naught will remain of him. With the belief in Brahm, man in this life *is* swallowed up in Brahm, and has no separate determination. By death he cannot escape the same thing.

The Egyptians made the soul's cycle complete itself in three thousand years and return to the human form again. But in its symbols it half expressed a profounder insight into the nature of spirit, and again was piqued by this very expression

to endeavor to seize the meaning. Thus it alternately repeated the symbol and strove to seize the truth symbolized; and thus ends the Oriental or Pantheistic stage of the doctrines regarding the nature of the soul.

III. When we find a theory that makes consciousness the permanent characteristic of the entire cycle of the Soul, we have ascended above the Orient and taken the true spiritual point of view—and this begins with Greece.

It is the Greek who answers the Sphinx riddle—a riddle asking for the cycle that remains self-identical in all its phases. Man is the “solvent word”: “know thyself” the destiny, final aim, of spirit. The beginning of this (the final period of history) presents us with an undeveloped and incomplete form. The Greek has found the human soul as a conscious being to be the substantial essence of the world. It places its ideals as fair divinities on Olympus, and its mythology tells us how Spirit in the form of self-determining individuality has overcome the forces of Nature and the primordial forms of the same—the Titans together with the elder dynasty of Gods. In its assertion of the Substantial as a concrete individual it has neglected the depths of the human spirit; we may say, therefore, that the Greek merely asserts in a general or vague manner the substantiality of the soul.

It is the Roman who seizes more centrally the human spirit. He seizes the *realized Will*, wherein the *character* or *abiding individuality* is displayed. What I am through general habits, or through blindly following the conventionalities of society, is not my own individuality in so high a sense as what I am through strength of will long directed to the realization of rational deeds. The will, energizing, makes for itself certain forms, and these when stated are codes of laws. The Roman laws are the rational forms in which all modern peoples have secured (at least the first stages of) their freedom.

But this development of spirit, although more central in its apprehension of the true essence, is still partial. The Will, although self-determination, is only an undeveloped form of it. It always presupposes something opposed to it which needs its action and modification. Thus its act extends beyond itself, and does not strictly return into itself. Its cycle, therefore, is not perfect. It involves an uncanceled externality. In the

struggle of the Roman consciousness to complete the will to a pure self-determining Being it widens its scope, and, through its external conquests becoming more and more a totality and a resistless might to the without-lying territory, it dirempts itself and becomes despotic (i. e. not finding the external limit strong enough to try the strength of its political will, it wrecks the surplus upon its own subjects). Its will reacts upon itself, and slavery and oppression follow. As soon as antithesis of this kind developes, the rational basis of the will disappears and arbitrariness takes its place. For the opposing parties do not find their limits in the Reasonable—or the Universal—but each is restrained only through the opposing will of the other party.

IV. Under these circumstances, the entire civilized world of that time lets go its hold of the Substantial which has been embodied for it in the state. In this utter ruin of its temporal substance, it turns within to find the deepest of all reconciliations. At this point the Christian principle enters as the fulfilment of the desire of the world. Man as man (all men) are in essence the same. The Internal, which is the True, can only be realized through the renunciation of all naturalness; naturalness is the form of dependence, or of being determined from without. Hence in this new standpoint we have arrived at the complete annulment of Nature as the substantial. We are now to regard the soul as the final cause of the world, and as eternal through the fact that it produces its own reconciliation by voluntary renunciation of all that is alien to it. Only that which is able to pass through this infinite negation can be considered as abiding. Paradox as it may sound: the product of its own negation is the only product that can survive the mutations of time. This is the relation of the Christian idea to the world into which it came and took root.

All institutions gradually took on a form in accordance with it. All conventionalities and laws and institutions of modern times are direct outgrowths of the doctrine (regarding the soul) which we have enunciated. Were we to set up as a principle the denial of man's immortality and draw logical results, we should annihilate all that is regarded as rational by the modern world, whether in society or the state, in Art, Religion or Philosophy.

To sum up this historic view :

The first epoch (the unhistorical period) of the race, while it holds to the existence of the soul after death, does not really grant any validity to the soul as a substantial existence, but seizes only its idiosyncrasies. It believes in sorcery.

The second epoch grants also the individual existence after death, but comes in conflict with its theoretic tenets concerning the nature of substantial existence. It holds consciousness to be incompatible with Absolute Being. This is the Pantheistic view, and the common form of statement is this : The soul is not an essence ; it is a product of Nature, and returns back at death or ultimately into Nature again. It is a wave in the ocean of Being, and ultimately is swallowed up, and never succeeds in attaining to true individuality.

The third epoch, which culminates with Christianity, is that in which Nature is subordinated to spirit. The latter is seized as the true universal essence whose form is individuality ; while Nature is, on the contrary, held to be the estrangement of spirit from itself, and thus a mere becoming of spirit, and consequently as without essence when regarded by itself.

All Christian dogmas contain as innermost kernel the true speculative doctrine of the soul, no matter how unmeaning some of those doctrines are to the sensuous form of thinking. Take, for example, that of total depravity, a doctrine growing unpopular in some directions because of its too narrow interpretation : it states that man by nature is totally depraved ; that by nature there is no good thing in him. That this is the deepest truth with reference to spirit, all will bear witness who reflect that Nature is regarded as that which is made what it is by an external power ; that it is that which is extended in Space and Time. Now, every one considers that human being as the lowest who has not any thing but natural or brute impulses, and who has not subdued them and reformed his character. Everybody despises as idiotic him who has not thought out anything for himself, but who takes everything from others through imitation. But even imitation is impossible without partial self-determination ; without a partial cancelling of one's own naturalness, of course one could never put on the semblance of another. Spirit cannot grow by accretion. No man can give another one a truth except

on condition that the latter receive it by thinking it over, and thus being creatively active. Thus, in the doctrine of total depravity is stated the great principle that Spirit is a self-activity, and is nothing except through its own mediation.

In conclusion, we may briefly state the grounds of the doctrine of Immortality freed from historical wrappage. There are now, as in all times, three views extant: the view originating from sensuous thinking—the view originating from the reflective intellect—and, thirdly, that taken by the Rational or Speculative intellect.

To the senses, immortality cannot be much more than a mere fancy. To the reflective intellect, now very active in the direction of natural science, it must grow ever more uncertain the more it ponders the problem. But as doubt is diffused by natural science, a natural correction will always come in through the manifestations of the natural side of spirit as exhibited in the phenomena of instinct, somnambulism, &c. For the atomistic reflection, while demanding a substrate for its hypothetical faculties and forces, will become so completely abstract and mechanical that the magical side of spirit must reassert itself again and again.

To the speculative insight, however, immortality is ever a clear result.

The possibility of death can only belong to a being which is not self-limited. A being limited through another may perish through the removal of the limit. A body always has external limits, and the removal of these, causes the destruction of the individuality of that body. The permanent abiding cannot find a lodgment in any particular body for the mentioned reason. Wherever bodies are concerned, a *process* is the only permanent thing involved. The Permanent must have within itself its determining limits; in other words, it must be that which forms or builds its own character. But to be this, it must exist as a *pure Negative* related to itself. To think this, requires the thought of an activity without a substrate, which is a difficult thought. But Schelling says that whoever cannot think action or antithesis without a substrate cannot philosophize at all. This pure negative relation to itself is exactly what calls itself "I"—the Ego or subject of all consciousness. To be able to think itself under the form of

"I am," a being must be generic and individual at the same time. But a generic individual is not capable of being destroyed by change, for all change only affects it unessentially. It is the *summum genus*, and there is no transcending it. This constitutes what we call personal identity. In self-consciousness, subject and object are the same. In life simply—as it appears in animals—instinct takes the place of the Ego, and when this is the case the genus is sundered into male and female individuals (sex=sect=sundered), so that neither is complete, and both are perishable in consequence. This was well understood even by Plato, who states the division of the individual into an antithesis as the characteristic of all the realms of Nature.

In the final epoch of History alone does man recognize fully his own essence. All the movements of civilization are the unfolding into actual realization of his infinite ideal.

CONCLUSION.

The Speculative Insight into Immortality—Its Outline.

1st Position.—All being is either dependent or independent; if the former, then it is a part of the latter.

2d Position.—Independent being is either determined (made what it is) by itself, or by somewhat else; but since determination by another would make it dependent, it follows that all Independent Being is self-determined.

3d Position.—Self-determined Being is a subject and object in one—determiner and determined. It is Self-conscious Being.

4th Position.—Original or Independent Being—called God in Religion—is Pure Self-consciousness, and this is the Activity which makes itself its own object.

5th Position.—But this implies the externality of Himself to Himself, and this is Space; and since knowing is a reducing of externality to internality, time is present as the cancelling of space. Hence, too, arise the kingdoms of Nature—a series of ascending degrees which reflect God more and more as they ascend in the series, by being more self-determined.

6th Position.—This series must end in a being which is God's image or self-object—his thought of himself—and this Being must realize in himself the complete ascent beyond Time

and Space. And were this not so, there could be no Absolute self-determined Being and no God—no substance, and consequently no finite or changing being.

7th Position.—Man is such a being as ends the series of Nature; for if we suppose a higher than man created, were he a fixed being, man being a progressive being would transcend him; or if that being were a progressive being, he would only be identical in nature with man after all.

The demand that the reflection into Himself shall be complete—that God's Image shall actually exist—can only be fulfilled by a Being that can cut loose entirely from Nature or externality and still preserve individual characteristics—can be fulfilled, in short, only by immortal beings. The self-identity whose characteristics are through and by means of self-determination, is permanent self-identity, whereas that identity which consists in external marks—conferred by existences alien to the subject marked—is perishable and is destroyed the moment the externalities are removed, like individual waves in the ocean.

The necessity of the existence of immortal beings is not a constraint (or external limit) to the Absolute, but is only His logical necessity or self-determination.

The doctrine of future existence may be held (as it is by Oriental peoples) independent of the doctrine of Immortality. All proofs of Immortality must ground ultimately in the one here given, namely: that the series of nature must end in a Being which has permanent identity, one in whom generic and individual are one, one whose character is self-made. Man claims the position, not as an animal, but only as a thinking being.

Thus reversing the seven positions above stated: If there is no immortal individual being that ascends from Nature, then the Absolute which Nature reflects is nowhere reflected as a Permanent, and hence His determination does not return to Himself; hence He is finite and no Absolute, and thus He sinks into the rank of other natural beings. Thus there can be no self-determined beings and no totalities; hence everywhere only dependence and partialness; and this dependence depends not on itself, for that would contradict its dependent

nature; nor on the Independent, for that cannot exist under this hypothesis. Therefore, no determination, whether through itself, or through others, can exist, but *each is naught, all is naught*.

But if anything is, then there must exist the Absolute and its reflection; and its reflection implies immortal beings. And man fulfils as subject-object (conscious Ego) the conditions, and is therefore immortal.

THE SETTLEMENT FOR ALL POSSIBLE PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTES.

By A. E. KROEGER.

It certainly is not likely that two persons will ever fall into a dispute about any proposition, unless they either hold each a different interpretation of one of the words contained in that proposition, or unless that proposition is the assertion of some empirical fact. We, of course, can and will ever continue to dispute about the latter sort of assertions, as, for instance, by whom powder was first invented; how far the sun is distant from the earth, &c.; or rather we will not dispute, but simply disagree on those matters, leaving, by mutual consent, the questions open to future empirical rectification. But that we can ever dispute about propositions of not an empirical character, provided we have precisely the same definition of every word in a proposition, seems to be utterly impossible; since every such proposition ought apparently to be reducible to $A = A$, or $\neg A \text{ not} = A$. For a non-empirical proposition involves a conception, and the assertion of a predicate as belonging to it. Now, if I do not agree to the predicate as a component of the conception, then the difficulty is simply that I have not defined that conception as my opponent wants it defined, and we are involved in a word dispute as to whether in ordinary language the conception named by him is used as involving such a component or not. One of us will then have to choose a different, or coin a new, word, and by so doing our whole dispute will have been settled.